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National Institute on Drug Abuse

Elder-Ed
Group Leader's Guide
to
Wise Use of Drugs

A Program for Older Americans

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service
Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration

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Elder-Ed
Group Leader's Guide
to
Wise Use of Drugs
A Program for Older Americans

National Institute on Drug Abuse
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20857

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The Elder-Ed booklet, ***Using Your Medicines Wisely***, has a ***Passport to Good Health Care*** bound into it. The booklet is available from two sources:

For free single copies of the booklet, write to the National Clearinghouse for Drug Abuse Information, Room 10A53, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Md. 20857.

Copies are for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, Stock Number 017-024-00969-5, at $3.00 each or $60.00 for 100 copies.

For additional single copies of the ***Elder-Ed Group Leader's Guide***, write to the National Clearinghouse for Drug Abuse Information, Room 10A53, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Md. 20857.

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About Elder-Ed

Elder-Ed is a program about the wise use of drugs—both prescription drugs and over-the-counter medicines. It is designed to help senior citizens prevent drug use problems before they occur, by way of an informal training session or workshop. There are three parts to the program. Each part has a film portion followed by a discussion session, and each deals with a different aspect of drug use.

Part 1. Drug Problems, Communicating With Doctors concerns the importance of giving complete and accurate information to the doctor and getting complete information from the doctor about the drugs you are taking. The film portion shows seniors describing typical drug problems.

Part 2. Buying Drugs Wisely concerns ways to cut drug costs and ways to make the best use of services that pharmacists can provide.

Part 3. Taking Drugs Carefully, Focusing on Healthy Aging concerns typical problems of drug use at home, their consequences, and ideas and systems to avoid problems. It also stresses alternatives to drug use through focusing on healthy aging.

Altogether, the film portion is about 30 minutes long. The total time required for the training, including three discussion periods and a coffee break, is estimated at 1½ to 2 hours.

This guide includes an outline for conducting each part of the workshop and summary notes to keep in front of you during the session. If you are not accustomed to leading training sessions, you may find the suggestions on the next few pages helpful.

The Elder-Ed Materials

- Film (one copy)—A three-part film on wise drug use.
- ***Elder-Ed Group Leader's Guide*** (one copy)—A guide to leading the training program.
- Elder-Ed booklet (one copy for each workshop participant)—in two parts bound together.

Using Your Medicines Wisely: A Guide for the Elderly summarizes the information in the Elder-Ed program. It discusses: giving and receiving clear information when you visit the doctor; getting information about medicines from your pharmacist; organizing a system for taking your medicines; and knowing what to do when a medicine causes negative side effects. A list of "Do's and Don'ts" of wise drug use appears on the inside front and back covers.

Passport to Good Health Care, bound into the center of ***Using Your Medicines Wisely***, has blank spaces for filling in information on your doctors and medicines. The ***Passport*** can be removed from the center and carried separately.

The Group Leader's Job

It will be your job to:

- Make arrangements for the training session—getting the group together, arranging for borrowing or renting a film projector, and so forth
- Introduce yourself and the program
- Distribute the Elder-Ed booklet, ***Using Your Medicines Wisely***

- Start the film and stop it at the end of each section
- Lead discussions following parts 1, 2, and 3 of the film
- Present the sections of the booklet that accompany parts 1, 2, and 3 to the group

If you like, you may get another member of the group to help you in leading the session.

It is highly recommended that you arrange for a doctor, nurse, or pharmacist to be present at the workshop to answer medical questions. The risk of misinforming the group is greatly reduced by having a professional on hand to give accurate medical information. If medical questions come up during the workshop and no medical person is present, it is probably best to refer the questioner to his or her own doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.

A Word About Equipment

The audiovisual portion of this program is a 16 mm sound color film. A 16mm projector and screen will be needed to show the film in a darkened room. If your group does not have a projector, you may be able to borrow one from a school or church or rent one from an audiovisual supply house if you are in a large community.

Leader's Checklist

To help you in planning the program, here is a leader's checklist of things to do before the day of the Elder-Ed workshop:

Task	Completed (✓)

3 to 4 weeks before the session

- Let the group know when the program will be shown
- Arrange for loan or rental of movie projector and screen
- Arrange for a doctor, nurse, or pharmacist to be present at the session, if possible. Provide him or her with the Elder-Ed booklet to review.
- Order additional materials, if necessary

1 week before the session

- Arrange for setup of room (Will there be enough chairs? How can the room be darkened for showing the film?)
- Plan your break (Will refreshments be served?)

1 or 2 days before the session

- Screen the film so that you will be familiar with it. Consider inviting the medical person who will help with the workshop to see the film too.
- Re-read the **Leader's Guide** and **Using Your Medicines Wisely**
- Fill out the ***Passport***, which is bound into your copy of ***Using Your Medicines Wisely***
- Remove the **Summary Notes** pages from this guide and refer to them as you lead the group

If You Have Never Conducted a Training Session Like This . . .

Presenting a training program to a senior citizens' group is not easy. Since this is a learning situation rather than a social gathering, discussion must be focused. On the other hand, the leader should *not* discourage people from talking and comparing individual experiences. Your job is to encourage the group to talk and discuss but, at the same time, to keep discussion from straying too far from the subject or from running on too long.

You should also keep in mind the physical comfort of your audience. It's hard to sit still for 2 hours, so we suggest a break following part 2. Hard-of-hearing people should be encouraged to sit closer to the loud speakers. Here are some further suggestions to make the program a successful one:

- Involve your audience; let the group talk. No one likes to be "given the answers."
- If one or two people are monopolizing the discussion, don't be afraid to cut them off. You can say, for example, "Thank you, Jane. Do you have some other ideas, Mary?" Sharing experiences is fine—but not by one person at the expense of the group's time.
- Speak clearly and loudly enough for everyone to hear you—and have others in the group do so, too. Repeat questions or answers if the whole group can't hear them.
- When reviewing printed materials, read aloud or have someone in the group read for you.
- Watch the attention span and alertness of your audience. If necessary, shorten discussions or

plan the training in two segments to avoid tiring the group.

Conducting the Program

To make sure the program doesn't run too long, we suggest you have a timetable in mind from the start. Naturally, the time devoted to each discussion will vary from group to group, but we suggest you plan on the following general time allocations.

- **Leader's Introduction** — 5 minutes
- **Part 1. Communicating With Doctors** — 35 minutes
  - film portion, 15 minutes
  - discussion, 20 minutes
- **Part 2. Buying Drugs Wisely** — 20 minutes
  - film portion, 5 minutes
  - discussion, 15 minutes
- **Break** — 5-10 minutes
- **Part 3. Taking Drugs Carefully** — 35 minutes
  - film portion, 10 minutes
  - discussion, 25 minutes
- **Total Time** — About 105 minutes (1½-2 hours)

The next 11 pages cover each part in detail. Summary notes follow each part. You can use the summary notes as you lead the group, to help you remember important points.

Introduction: When the Group Arrives

Suggested Time	Materials Needed
Leader's Introduction: 3 minutes Handing out the Elder-Ed booklets: 2 minutes **Total Time:** 5 minutes	Participants should receive the Elder-Ed booklets as they enter.

1. Leader's Introduction

In order to explain what the program is and set the group at ease, we suggest you say a few words at the start. You will want to let the group know:

- Who you are, and the name of the health professional who will be answering any medical questions
- What the training is: a program on wise drug use prepared for the National Institute on Drug Abuse (the program will focus on drug use problems and how we can prevent them)
- How long the program will take: about 1½ to 2 hours altogether, with film and discussion sections
- What will be presented: a three-part film—one on doctor visits, one on buying drugs wisely, and one on home drug use and alternatives to drug use
- When and for how long you plan to break: a 5-10 minute break after part 2 usually works well.

2. The Booklet: *Using Your Medicines Wisely*

Once you have introduced yourself and the program, check to make sure everyone has a copy of the Elder-Ed booklet. Since the booklets won't be needed for a while, people can place them under their seats or in some other out-of-the-way place. Tell the group that sometimes the narrator in the film will mention Elder-Ed booklets that aren't given out any more. Nearly all the information in the old booklets has been condensed into the new one. Then turn on part 1 of the film.

Part 1: Drug Problems, Communicating With Doctors

Suggested Time	Materials Needed
Film portion: 15 minutes Discussion of doctors: 10 minutes Review of *Passport:* 10 minutes **Total Time:** 35 minutes	• Film • ***Passport to Good Health Care*** (bound into center of the booklet)

1. Description of Film Portion

The film introduces the new world of modern medication, in which people are living longer and using more drugs than ever before and problems of drug use can—and do—occur. Chicago seniors then discuss problems they've had. The section continues with a dramatized doctor-patient visit in which there are many problems of communication, and it ends

with suggestions for improving the visit. These suggestions include:

- Write down the questions you want to ask
- Bring your medicines or a ***Passport to Good Health Care*** to the doctor so he will know *all* of the drugs you're taking
- Get complete instructions on drugs—in writing
- Ask questions when something isn't clear.

2. Discussion

We want to find out the group's ideas on how to improve communication with doctors. Here are some questions you may want to use to get the discussion started:

- What are some things that were wrong in the first visit we saw?
- What could the patient have done to make the visit go better? (Allow several answers: told all the medicines, made sure she knew the instructions, etc.)
- How do you think doctors feel about patients asking questions?
- What information should we get about our prescription before we leave the doctor? (How many to take, when, foods and beverages to avoid, alcohol interactions, how long to continue, side effects to expect, etc.)
- Why do doctors need to know *all* the medicines we're taking? How can we make sure all are included? (Bring medicines, bring a list, or bring the ***Passport.)***

3. Passport

Now ask the group to remove the light blue ***Passport to Good Health Care*** from the center of the Elder-Ed booklet. The ***Passport*** is designed to be carried in purse or pocket and will provide doctors with *full* information on all the drugs the patient is taking. First, have the group turn to the Chicago seniors' list of "bring to's" and "get froms" on the second and third pages. Read the list with them. Then point out the other features of the ***Passport***, beginning on the first white page inside the cover:

- The first page has space for your name, address, and phone and emergency numbers
- The second and third pages are the list of "bring to's" and "get froms"
- The fourth and fifth pages have space for listing the names and telephone numbers of your doctors, hospital, pharmacy, and dentist
- The rest of the pages are the most important part of the ***Passport***. On them, you'll list and describe all your medications. This list will provide you and your doctors with all the essential information on all the drugs you are taking. Tell the group to fill in the ***Passport*** at home as fully as they can, then have their physicians complete the rest.

If there are no further questions, start part 2 of the film.

Summary Notes: Part 1

- Show part 1 of the film
- Discuss doctor visit
  - what went wrong?
  - what could patient do?
- Discuss information to "get from" the doctor about drugs
- Discuss when we need to *bring* information on all our drugs to our doctors
- Go over ***Passport***
- Start part 2 of film

Notes:

Part 2: Buying Drugs Wisely

Suggested Time	Materials Needed
Film: 5 minutes Discussion: 15 minutes **Total Time:** 20 minutes	• film • Elder-Ed booklet, pages 11 and 12

1. Description of Film Portion

Buying drugs wisely includes knowing how to save money on drugs and how to get the packages and labels we need. Many prescription drugs are available in a lower-cost generic (chemical name) form as well as a brand name form. The film discusses the differences between generic and brand name drugs and suggests other ways to save money, such as buying through mail order programs. A pharmacist shows services that pharmacists can provide to senior customers, such as providing easy-open caps and information on drugs.

2. Discussion

Does the group understand the difference between generic and brand name drugs? How can they use the services of their pharmacists? Here are questions you may want to use to get discussions started:

- What is a generic drug? (A drug sold under its chemical, or *generic* name, rather than a brand name. It's like *chlorine bleach* versus the brand name, Clorox, or *facial tissues* versus Kleenex brand.)

- Can your doctor prescribe a generic drug? (Yes, when one is available. In many cases, though, the drug is protected by patents and cannot be purchased under its generic name.)
- Can your pharmacist substitute a generic drug without a doctor's permission? (It depends on the laws of the State—check with a local pharmacist to find out.)
- What are some services pharmacists can provide for us? (Allow several answers.)
- Point out the generic and brand name discussion on page 12 of the Elder-Ed booklet.

3. Take a Break

You may wish to serve coffee or other refreshments to the group. After the break, go on to part 3 of the training.

Summary Notes: Part 2

- Show part 2 of the film
- Discuss generic and brand name drugs
  - what is a generic drug?
  - advantages and disadvantages of generic and brand name drugs
- Discuss services pharmacists can provide
- Show the booklet on generic and brand name drugs
- Take a break
- Start part 3 of the film.

Notes:

Part 3: Taking Drugs Carefully

Suggested Time	Materials Needed
Film: 10 minutes Discussion of "do's and don'ts": 5 minutes Discussion of systems: 10 minutes Discussion of alternatives: 5 minutes	• Film • The Do's and Don'ts list in booklet on wise drug use

1. Description of Film Portion

Part 3 of the film concerns problems in taking medicines, ideas for avoiding problems, and alternatives to medication *abuse*. Seniors describe the dangers of swapping drugs, discontinuing suddenly, taking too many, and failing to keep aware of their schedule for taking medicines. A Chicago visiting nurse offers suggestions on storing medicines and keeping track of how and when to take them. Seniors describe instances of drug abuse and their solutions to such situations.

2. Discussion

We want to find out the group's ideas on ways to avoid drug problems and ways of taking drugs wisely. Here are questions you may want to use to get discussion started:

- What kinds of drug use problems did the people in the film have?
- Do you know from your own experience of any other problems people can have?

- What are some things people *should* and *shouldn't* do when taking drugs?
- What else can we do to avoid problems?
- What can help us avoid using more drugs than we need? (diet, exercise, involvement, etc.)
- The nurse in the film discussed several systems to keep track of medicines. What did you think of them?
- Do you know of any other good ideas? Do you have a good system yourself?

3. Systems for Keeping Track

Point out pages 13 to 23 in the Elder-Ed booklet. Show how the pages are organized, with suggestions for the following problems:

- Remembering *how* to take a number of different medicines
- Remembering *whether* you took a particular medicine
- Remembering *when* to take your medicines
- Reading the labels on your prescriptions.

Suggest that the group read the booklet at home, and, if they want, make up a chart or card to carry with them. They can also have someone make up a chart for them.

4. Side Effects, and Do's and Don'ts

Point out pages 23 to 26 in the booklet, discussing side effects of medicines. Show the group the list of Do's and Don'ts on the inside front and back covers. Suggest that the group read those parts of the booklet at home.

5. Concluding the Program

Ask if there are any final questions or suggestions. If not, after your thank yous and good-byes, the program is over.

Summary Notes: Part 3

- Show part 3 of film
- Discuss problems in taking drugs—problems discussed in the film and others the group knows of
- Discuss things *to do* and *not to do* in taking drugs
- Discuss alternatives to overuse of drugs
- Discuss systems for keeping track
- Review booklet pages on systems
- Review pages on side effects, do's and don'ts list.

Notes:

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